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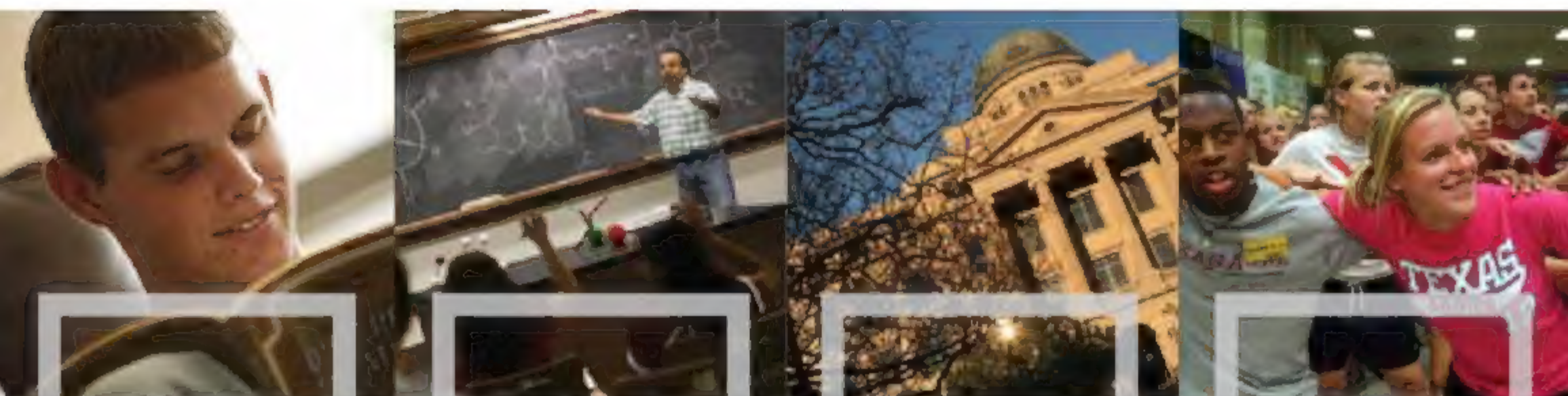
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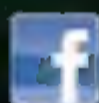
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On the Cover: Kevin Sumlin is Texas A&M's new head coach. Photo by Jason McConnell '01



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Howdy!

Normally in this issue I would say something like, "I can't believe this year is already over." However, with everything that happened around Aggieland during 2011, I find myself wondering how so many things took place in just one year.

It all began with Texas A&M battling longtime rival LSU in the 75th Cotton Bowl Classic. The Aggies kept up with the Tigers for a while, but were clearly outmanned, especially when senior leader Michael Hodges was knocked out of the game.

Both basketball teams extended their streak of NCAA Tournament invitations to six consecutive seasons. Then, Gary Blair's team went and shocked the world, winning the program's first-ever national championship.

A few weeks later, Von Miller was selected by the Denver Broncos with the second overall pick in the 2011 NFL Draft. The consensus All-American and Butkus Award winner is already a force to be reckoned with in the NFL and is the leading candidate to win defensive rookie of the year honors.

The men's basketball program went through an unexpected coaching change when Mark Turgeon left for Maryland. Murray State's Billy Kennedy was hired to take over the program a week later.

In June, the Texas A&M track and field program made history in becoming the only school to win dual national championships in three consecutive years, while the Aggie baseball team advanced to the College World Series for the first time since 1999.

The typically quiet summer in Aggieland was anything but with talks of conference realignment resurfacing in July. There was also buzz about the A&M football team beginning the season ranked in the top ten and with national title aspirations.

After all the dust settled in the realignment madness, Texas A&M officially became the Southeastern Conference's 13th member in September. That announcement was sandwiched between devastating losses in football to No. 7 Oklahoma State and No. 18 Arkansas. The Aggies had double digit halftime leads in both games, but finished with disastrous second halves – a trend that became all too familiar all season.

The Aggie family was dealt another blow when Kennedy was diagnosed with early stages of Parkinson's disease in late October. That, coupled with a first-game injury to Khrist Middleton, set the program at least three weeks behind their opponents.

With what many expected to be one of the best A&M football teams in more than a decade, the Aggies' regular season ended in shambles with a loss to struggling archrival Texas in the last meeting between the two programs for the foreseeable future. A week later, Mike Sherman was fired in an embarrassing fashion that, while not worth rehashing, was certainly a terrible way to treat someone who represented A&M with nothing but class.

Which brings us to our cover story: Kevin Sumlin is the new head man in Aggieland. We're anxious to see who Sumlin hires to fill his coaching staff, but we know it won't include Tim DeRuyter – now the new head coach at Fresno State.

I didn't mention everything, but what a crazy year for an Aggie fan. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Gig'em Ags!

Brian '01

Aggieland

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twelve in twelve

Senior Megan Majewski's last-minute goal lifted the second-seeded Texas A&M soccer team to a 1-0 victory and a Big 12 Championship over No. 1 seed and previously undefeated Oklahoma State. The title marked the Aggies' 12th and final Big 12 Championship in the program's 16-year history with the conference. Photos by Jeff Huehn Photography.



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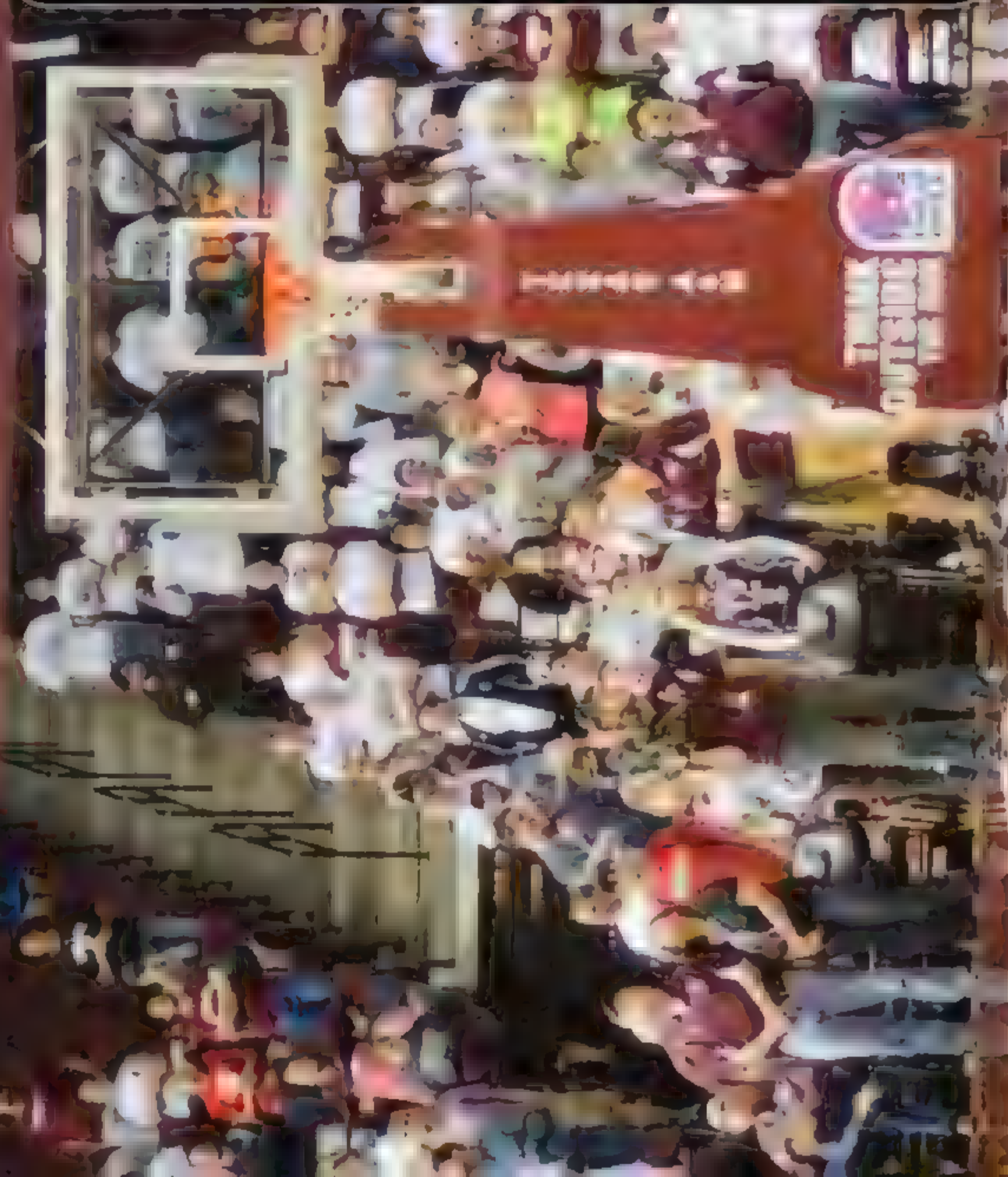


2011

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

2011 NCAA

A&M



banner year

The Texas A&M women's basketball program and its fans have had plenty of reasons to continue celebrating the historic 2010-11 season with the arrival of the national championship rings as well as the hanging of the championship banner and All-American Danielle Adams' jersey. Photos by Jason McConnell '01.



golden leg

Following a record-setting senior season, Randy Bullock received the 2011 Lou Groza Place-Kicker Award and earned consensus All-America honors. Bullock finished the regular season as the NCAA leader in field goals per game and is one point away from breaking A&M's 84-year-old season scoring record. Photo by Jason McConnell '01 (inset courtesy Aggie Athletics).

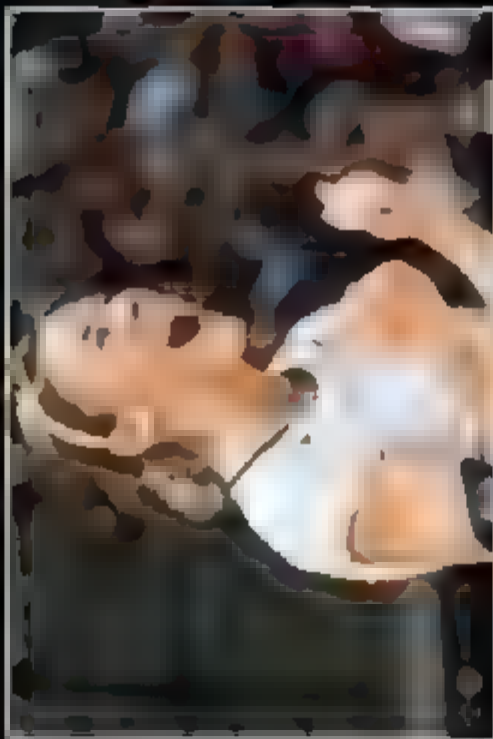


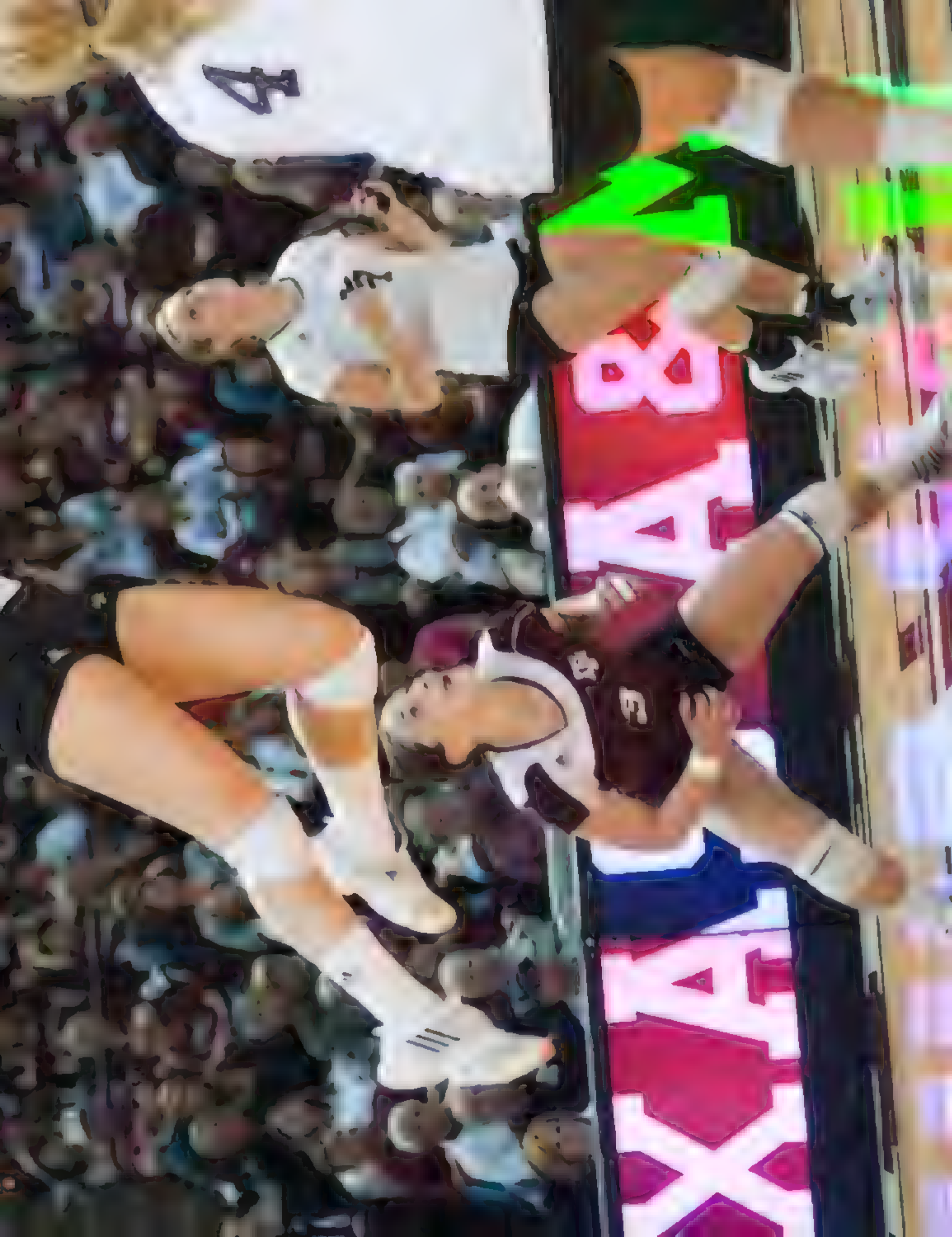




black attack

Kelsey Black completed her collegiate career after leading the Aggies to a 23-8 record – A&M's most wins since 2003 – and to the second round of the 2011 NCAA Championship. The team captain garnered All-Central Region Team accolades and made her second consecutive appearance on the All-Big 12 First Team. Black will continue her volleyball career with the Ponce Lionesses of the Women's Super Volleyball League. Photos by Brian Davis '01





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Future Aggies

A look at Texas A&M's November recruiting classes



WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

For the fourth straight year, the Texas A&M women's basketball program landed one of the top recruiting classes in the nation with the signing of six top-rated high school prospects.

Coming off the program's first national championship and a school-record 33-5 campaign, Gary Blair and his coaching staff welcome A&M's heralded recruiting class that was ranked as high as No. 2 in the country by ESPN HoopGurlz, The Collegiate Girls Basketball Report and Premier Basketball Report. The Aggies welcome 5-foot-10 wing Chelsea Jennings from Fort Worth, Texas, 5-foot-6 point guard Jordan Jones from DeSoto, Texas, 5-foot-7 combo guard Curtyce Knox from Humble, Texas, six-foot wing Peyton Little from Abilene, Texas, 5-foot-8 wing Courtney Walker from Edmond, Okla., and 6-foot-1 forward/guard Courtney Williams from Houston.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Alex Caruso and J'Mychal Reese, two of the top players in both Texas and the country, will join the Aggie men's basketball program next season.

The backcourt stars are both consensus national top 100 recruits and make up one of the country's top hauls. The Aggies' Class of 2012 is ranked 19th nationally

by rivals.com and in the top 25 by several other prominent recruiting services.

Caruso (College Station) and Reese (Bryan) have grown up watching the Aggie program rise to one of the country's elite, each living just a few miles away from Reed Arena.

BASEBALL

The Texas A&M baseball staff received the commitments of 11 student-athletes to join the Aggies for the fall of 2012.

Eric Brooks (Taylor/University of Houston/McLennan CC), Drew Featherston (Katy Taylor), Rex Hill (Tomball), Danny Holst (Parkway South St. Louis, Mo), Grayson Long (Barbers Hill), Hunter Melton (Corsicana), A.J. Minter (Brook Hill Academy), J.B. Moss (Brook Hill Academy), Cory Raley (Uvalde), Ryan Rand (Langham Creek) and Andrew Vinson (Flower Mound) comprise the 2012 class.

Ten of the 11 players are products of the Lone Star State, while Holst represents the only non-Texan in the class, hailing from Missouri. Additionally, Brooks is the only student-athlete in the class to come from the junior college ranks.

SOFTBALL

Three high school seniors signed national letters of intent to play softball at

Texas A&M. Cali Lanphear (Montgomery, Texas), Breanna Dozier (Rowlett, Texas) and Alex Masek (Giddings, Texas) will join the team for the 2012-13 season.

Lanphear is a 2011 TGCA All-State catcher who has led her Montgomery High School team to three state championships. Dozier has posted big offensive numbers for Rowlett High School in the past two years. Masek is a two-time First Team All-District infielder and a lefty slapper at Giddings High School.

VOLLEYBALL

Coach Laurie Corbelli's volleyball program signed five highly acclaimed student-athletes to national letters of intent. Four have been members of international, national and/or state championship teams, and the fifth is also the fourth-ranked discus thrower in the world for the 17 and under age group.

Three of the signees, 6-2 middle blocker Jazzmin Babers (Waco, Texas/Midway H.S.), 6-0 outside hitter Angela Lowak (New Braunfels, Texas/New Braunfels H.S.) and 5-10 outside hitter Sierra Patrick (Austin, Texas/Lake Travis H.S.) all were members of the Austin Juniors club team that won 2011 USAV Girls' Junior National Championships.

Shelby Sullivan a 6-2 outside hitter (Richardson, Texas/J.J. Pearce H.S.) led her Texas Advantage (TAV) club team to the 2009 USA Volleyball Girls Junior National Championships title. Shelbi Vaughn a 6-2 outside hitter/middle blocker (Mansfield, Texas/Legacy H.S.) has played varsity volleyball throughout her four-year prep career.

WOMEN'S TENNIS

First-year women's tennis coach Howard Joffe landed one of the nation's top junior players during the November signing period as blue-chip recruit Anna Mamatat of Philadelphia signed a National Letter of Intent to play for the Aggies.

MEN'S TENNIS

Mitchell Krueger, one of the top tennis recruits in the country, has signed a national letter of intent with Texas A&M. Krueger, the top-ranked recruit in the state of Texas and the No. 3 national recruit by TennisRecruiting.net, attends Spring Creek Academy in Dallas. He is ranked No. 15 in the International Tennis Federation world rankings. ■


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Aggie Dance Team Profile:
Kailey

Kailey Kelle

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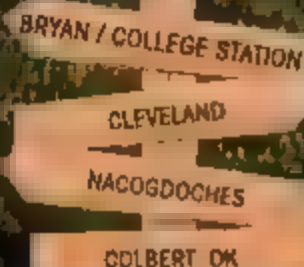
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THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA



Texas A&M hires Houston's Kevin Sumlin to replace Mike Sherman as the Aggies' head football coach BY BRIAN DAVIS 01

As Texas A&M begins a new era of football in the Southeastern Conference in 2012, the program will be led by a new head coach – former Houston head coach, Kevin Sumlin.

Sumlin is a familiar face, however, having served as an assistant under former head coach R.C. Slocum from 2001-02.

"I am very excited about the opportunity to serve as the head football coach at Texas A&M University," Sumlin said. "Having coached there before, I understand the culture and embrace the commitment by the 12th Man regarding Aggie football. Aggieland is a special place and I look forward to working with the young men in the football program and recruiting the type of players we need to be successful in the SEC."

In his first stint at A&M, Sumlin started out as the assistant head coach and wide receivers coach. After three games in 2002

with the Aggies averaging just 16 points per game, Sumlin received a call from Slocum.

"I look back at the night that R.C. called me," Sumlin said, "which was a Sunday night, and said be prepared to come in here Monday morning and take over the offense in the middle of the season...that doesn't happen very often."

After his promotion to offensive coordinator, the Aggies averaged 33 points per game and knocked off the top-ranked Oklahoma Sooners, 30-26, at Kyle Field. However, Slocum was fired after the season and new head coach Dennis Franchione brought his entire staff with him from Alabama.

"Anytime you're put in a position of leadership it's got to help you," Sumlin said. "That was a real stressful situation. Looking back on that, going through those nine games and then being

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without a job right after that and putting that much into it was one of most stressful times of my life. I know it was probably the most stressful time in my wife's life. Little did I know at that time it was probably the best thing that happened to me."

Sumlin landed on his feet as special teams coordinator and tight ends coach under Bob Stoops at the University of Oklahoma. Three years later, he was promoted to co-offensive coordinator/wide receivers coach. During five years at OU, the Sooners went to four BCS bowl games.

Shortly after Mike Sherman was hired as Texas A&M's head coach in 2007, there was speculation that Sumlin might return to Aggieland as the team's offensive coordinator. However, when the University of Houston offered Sumlin his first head coaching opportunity, he couldn't pass it up.

In 2008, Sumlin's first year as a collegiate head coach, he led UH to an 8-5 mark and a victory over Air Force in the Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl in Fort Worth. It marked the school's first bowl victory since 1980.

Sumlin was a finalist for the 2009 Paul "Bear" Bryant National Coach of the Year when he led the Cougars to a Conference USA West Division crown and a final record of 10-4. Despite losing his top two quarterbacks to injuries in the 2010 season, Sumlin led UH to a 5-7 mark just missing a bowl appearance.

This season, Sumlin led the Cougars to a school-record 12 wins and the program's highest finish in the Bowl Championship Series rankings. The Cougars led the nation in total offense, passing

"I've had the opportunity over the last 20-something years to play in some of the so-called greatest stadiums and venues in the country. There's none finer on game day than Kyle Field. For me as a football coach to have the opportunity to lead our university into the SEC, to play in arguably the best conference and best division in college football, is an exciting thing for me. And it should be an exciting thing for this university, it should be an exciting thing for our players, for our alumni."

—ALUMNI SUMLIN



offense and scoring offense this season, marking the second time in four years to accomplish that feat under Sumlin's direction. Overall, Sumlin finished 35-17 at UH and for the third time in four years the Cougars are headed to a bowl game.

"I can't thank the University of Houston enough for giving me a chance to become a head football coach. It is tough to leave a group of players who have worked so hard and have done things the right way in taking Cougar football to greater heights."

Sumlin was born in Brewton, Ala., however, he grew up in Indianapolis, Ind. and attended Purdue University.

After earning a spot on the Boilermakers' roster as a walk-on, Sumlin worked his way up the depth chart at linebacker. He went on to become a four-year letterman and still ranks among the top 10 in career tackles for the Boilermakers. He was named to Sports Illustrated's All-America walk-on list as a freshman after leading Purdue with 91 tackles.

After graduating from Purdue in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in both criminology and criminal justice, Sumlin began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at Washington State for Mike Price (1989-90).

He worked as an assistant at Wyoming (1991-92) and Minnesota (1993-97) before returning to his alma mater, Purdue, under Joe Tiller in 1998. Three years later, Slocum brought him to Aggieland.

Sumlin and his wife Charlene have four children: daughters Courtney and Shelby, and sons Jackson and Joey. **BY**



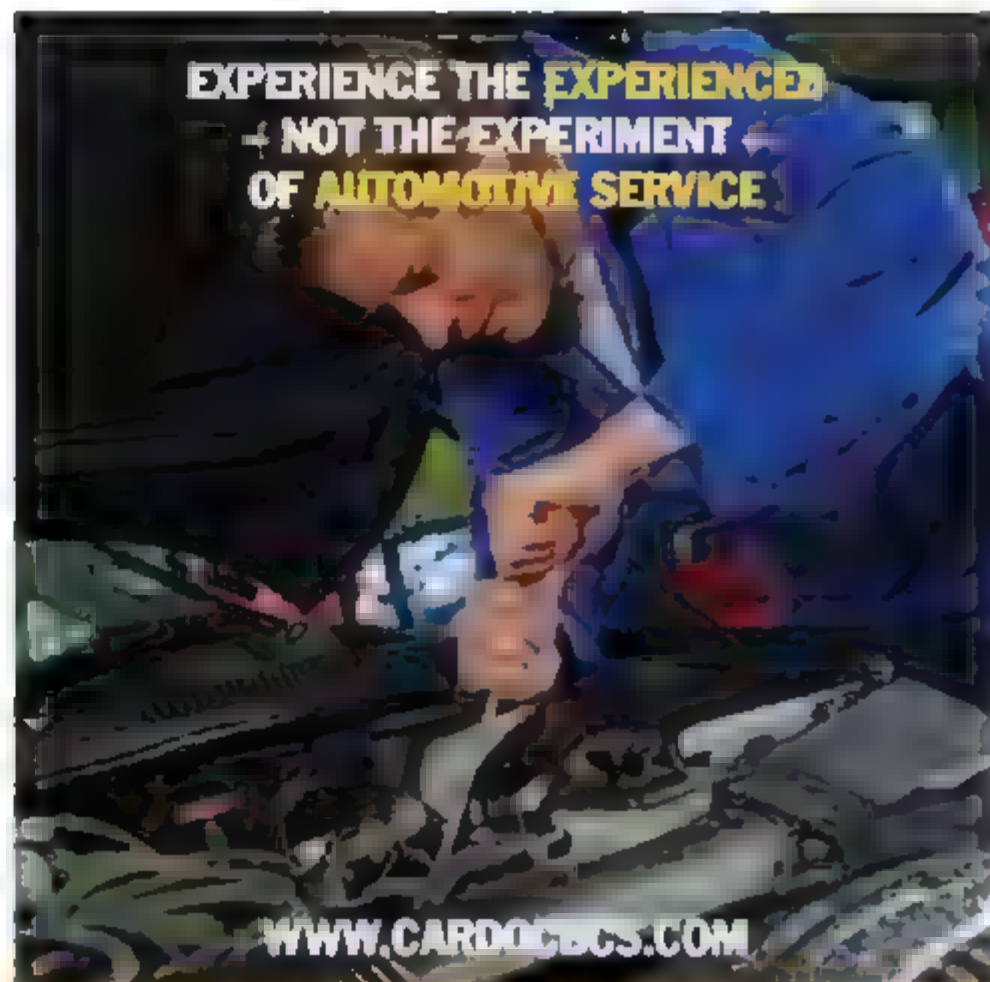
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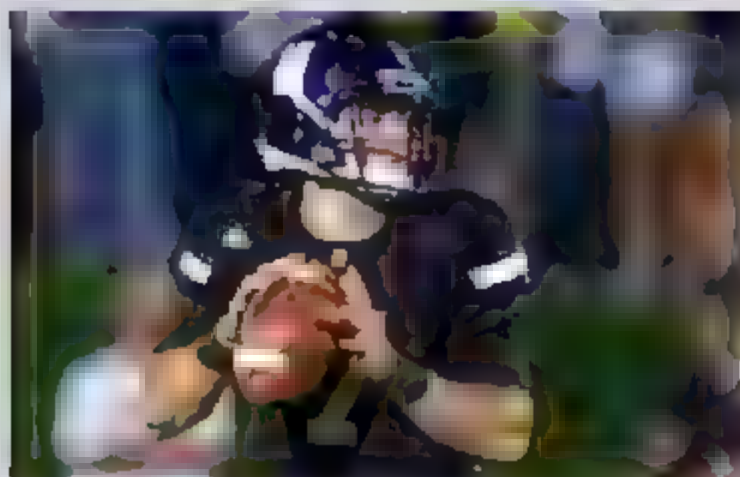


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WILDCATS TO WATCH



#7 QB Dan Persa (6-1, 210, senior)

Honorable Mention All-Big Ten
Team Captain



#9 TE Drake Dunsmore (6-3, 235, Senior)



#10 S Brian Peters (6-4, 220, Senior)

Leader of Northwest



#11 WR Jeremy Ebert (6-0, 195, Senior)

Second Team All-Big Ten



On New Year's Eve, Texas A&M will face Northwestern in the Meineke Car Care Bowl of Texas at 11 a.m. at Houston's Reliant Stadium.

After a shaky start to the 2011 campaign, the Wildcats' senior quarterback Dan Persa returned from injury and helped the team win four straight on the way to bowl eligibility. Persa suffered a season-ending injury with three games remaining in 2010. When he's healthy, Northwestern is a different football team.

The Wildcats claimed their biggest win this season in Lincoln, Nebraska when they upset the 9th-ranked Cornhuskers to formally welcome "Big Red" to the Big Ten Conference. Now, in Persa's final game as a Wildcat, Northwestern is looking for their first bowl victory since 1949.

Although the Aggies' bowl woes don't span more than a half century, they would certainly like to see their decade long drought come to an end in Houston. Interestingly enough, the last time the Aggies won a bowl game was right next door to Reliant Stadium, when Texas A&M defeated TCU at the Astrodome in the 2001 GalleryFurniture.com Bowl. **A**

Northwestern Wildcats (6-6)	BOWL MATCHUP BY THE NUMBERS	Texas A&M Aggies (6-6)
OFFENSIVE STATISTICS		DEFENSIVE STATISTICS
Total Offense/Defense (National Rank)	386.8 (85)	
Scoring Offense/Defense	28.7 (70)	
Rushing Offense/Defense	126.17 (34)	106.0 (13)
Passing Offense/Defense	260.58 (36)	
3rd Down Conversion % Offense/Defense	40.0 (10)	
4th Down Conversion % Offense/Defense		6.84 (17)
Red Zone Offense/Defense	76.4% (9/11)	
First Downs Offense/Defense	27.5 (34)	
Sacks Allowed Per Game/ Sacks Per Game		3.5 (13)
Turnovers (Interceptions/ Fumbles Lost)/Turnovers (Interceptions/ Fumbles Lost)	15.45 (9)	
DEFENSIVE STATISTICS		OFFENSIVE STATISTICS
Total Defense/Offense (National Rank)	386.8 (85)	386.8 (85)
Scoring Defense/Offense	28.7 (70)	28.7 (70)
Rushing Defense/Offense	106.0 (13)	126.17 (34)
Passing Defense/Offense		260.58 (36)
3rd Down Conversion % Defense/Offense		40.0 (10)
4th Down Conversion % Defense/Offense		6.84 (17)
Red Zone Defense/Offense		76.4% (9/11)
First Downs Defense/Offense		27.5 (34)
Sacks Per Game/Sacks Allowed Per Game		3.5 (13)
Passing Efficiency Defense/ Passing Efficiency		15.45 (9)



GOING HOME

With Texas A&M joining the SEC, Louisiana native Michael Lamothe feels right at home

BY KAYLIE MYNAR '12

Tight end Michael Lamothe was an integral part of Texas A&M's offense this season as the lead blocker for Aggie running backs and as a receiving threat for quarterback Ryan Tannehill.

However, you may be surprised to know that Lamothe only played two snaps at tight end during his entire high school football career. In fact, his first letter from Texas A&M was for the school's quarterback camp.

"It's funny how things change," Lamothe said.

Lamothe was born in Baton Rouge, La. in 1991. Two years later, his family moved about 80 miles away to New Iberia.

"I wish I had that southern Louisiana accent, but I don't."

Sports have always been in Lamothe's blood. His father played quarterback for LSU the last year that they had a JV team, and his grandfather played football and had contracts with both the St. Louis Cardinals (MLB) and the Green Bay Packers (NFL) before he was injured during the war.

"We've always loved sports," he said. "It's all we've ever done. I grew to love football because it's the American sport."

A versatile athlete, Lamothe starred at linebacker, quarterback and punter at New Iberia High School. He also excelled in the classroom, finishing second in his class with a 3.9 GPA.

Like most kids in Louisiana, Lamothe

grew up an LSU fan and wanted to follow his brother there.

"But now I don't like them at all," he said.

Lamothe committed to A&M the summer before his senior year after learning more about the university and its engineering school.

"They already had 23 commitments so my window was small," Lamothe said. "I couldn't miss out on the opportunity."

He came to Aggieland wanting to be a linebacker, but the coaches saw a future tight end.

"I mainly wanted to be on the field," he said. "Being a linebacker really helped me understand the tight end position."

As a true freshman, Lamothe was a key contributor on special teams in the final twelve games. As a sophomore, he made a huge impact at both the tight end and full back positions, earning honorable mention All-Big 12 accolades. This season, Lamothe finished fifth on the team with 14 receptions and third with three touchdowns.

How he fits into new head coach Kevin Sumlin's offense remains to be seen, but with Texas A&M joining the Southeastern Conference, Lamothe feels like he's going home.

"So many historical things have happened since I have been at Texas A&M," he said. "And now we're going to the SEC. I'm a senior next year, so I'm excited." ■



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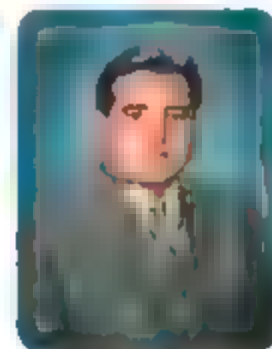
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01.04.12 MANHATTAN
02.08.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Wildcats 71 - Aggies 67 (Manhattan)

HEAD COACH:

Deb Patterson (16th year) 129-111 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

K State ranks 12th in NCAA D-1 history with 809 victories. Brittany Chambers has scored in double digits in 53 of 72 career games. Branshea Brown needs eight blocked shots to move into 10th in school history for career blocked shots. Mariah White has 196 career assists to rank 25th in school history.

01.08.12 COLLEGE STATION
02.21.12 NORMAN



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 81 - Sooners 68 (Kansas City)

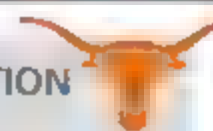
HEAD COACH:

Sherri Coale (16th year) 157-83 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Sophomore guard Aaryn Ellenberg has made a 3-pointer in an OU-record 27 consecutive games. The OU players average 6-1 in height - the tallest team in school history. Led by the tallest player in the program's history, 6-6 Nicole Griffin is among eight of 13 Sooners who are 6-0 or taller.

01.11.12 COLLEGE STATION
03.04.12 AUSTIN



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 77 - Longhorns 50 (Kansas City)

HEAD COACH:

Gail Goestenkors (4th year) 32-31 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Senior post Ashley Gayle's 4.2 blocks per game ranks fourth in the latest NCAA Division I rankings (Dec. 19) while sophomore guard Chassidy Fussell is ranked 25th nationally with a .897 (35 of 39) mark from the free throw line. The Longhorns have lost the last eleven games against the Aggies.

01.14.12 AMES
01.29.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 60 - Cyclones 51 (Ames)

HEAD COACH:

Bill Fennelly (17th year) 148-92 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Iowa State joins Baylor as the only Big 12 teams with three or more players with 20+ assists. Iowa State ranks second in the Big 12 in scoring defense and 15th nationally. The Cyclones are holding opponents to just 50.6 points per game on 32.6 percent shooting from the field.

01.18.12 COLLEGE STATION



Aggies 85 - Tigers 40 (Columbia)

Robin Pingeton (2nd year) 5-11 in Big 12

Senior Christine Flores is No. 2 in the nation with 42 blocked shots this season (4.88 per game). Flores is also ranked eighth in the nation in scoring with 22.9 points per game. Freshman Morgan Eye has the second best three-point field goal percentage in the country (53.5 percent).

01.21.12 LAWRENCE
02.04.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 81 - Jayhawks 58 (College Station)

HEAD COACH:

Bonnie Henrickson (8th year) 35-77 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Carolyn Davis is tops on the team contributing 16.1 points per game and is second in the nation with a .69 field goal percentage. As a team, KU ranks second in the country shooting 50.6 percent from the field. For the fifth straight season, Kansas notched at least nine non-conference wins.

02.18.12 COLLEGE STATION



Aggies 76 - Cowboys 67 (College Station)

Jim Littell (1st year)

OSU stands as the lone squad in the Big 12 without a senior on its roster. Junior Toni Young was named to the 2011-12 preseason All-Big 12 team. Although she has yet to do it in a college game, Young can dunk - she tied the national high jump record while in high school.

02.01.12 LUBBOCK
02.25.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 84 - Red Raiders 60 (College Station)

HEAD COACH:

Kristy Curry (6th year) 29-51 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Texas Tech is second in the Big 12 Conference in scoring margin (27.9) and 14th in the country. Junior point guard Monique Small leads the country with a 5.88 to-1 assist to turnover ratio. Texas Tech leads the Big 12 Conference and is No. 4 nationally with 15.8 steals per game this season.

02.11.12 WACO
02.27.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 58 - Bears 46 (Dallas)

HEAD COACH:

Kim Mulkey (12th year) 123-52 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Brittney Griner has registered a Big 12 record 451 career blocked shots. The Bears have defeated three top 10 programs this season: Notre Dame, Tennessee and Connecticut. Baylor hasn't allowed an opponent to shoot 50 percent from the field in 185 straight games, dating back to March 25, 2006.

2011-12 PRESEASON POLL POINTS

1. Baylor (9)
2. Texas A&M (11)
3. Texas
4. Oklahoma
5. Iowa State
6. Texas Tech
7. Kansas
8. Oklahoma State
9. Kansas State
10. Missouri

(First-place votes)

PRESEASON PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Brittney Griner, Baylor, C, 6-8, Jr.

PRESEASON NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Monique Small, Texas Tech, G, 5-8, Jr.

PRESEASON CO-FRESHMEN OF THE YEAR

Chassidy Fussell, Texas, G, 5-10, So-1
Aaryn Ellenberg, Oklahoma, G, 6-1, So-1

2011-12 PRESEASON ALL-BIG 12 TEAM

Brittney Griner, Baylor, C, 6-8, Jr.
Joysey Sims, Baylor, G, 5-8, So-1
Carolyn Davis, Kansas, F, 6-3, Jr-2L

Toni Young, Oklahoma State, G/F, 6-2, Jr-2L
Chassidy Fussell, Texas, G, 5-10, So-1L
Lyra White, Texas A&M, G, 6-0, Sr-3L





KELSEY BONE
Freshman Guard



ALEXIA STANDISH
Freshman Guard

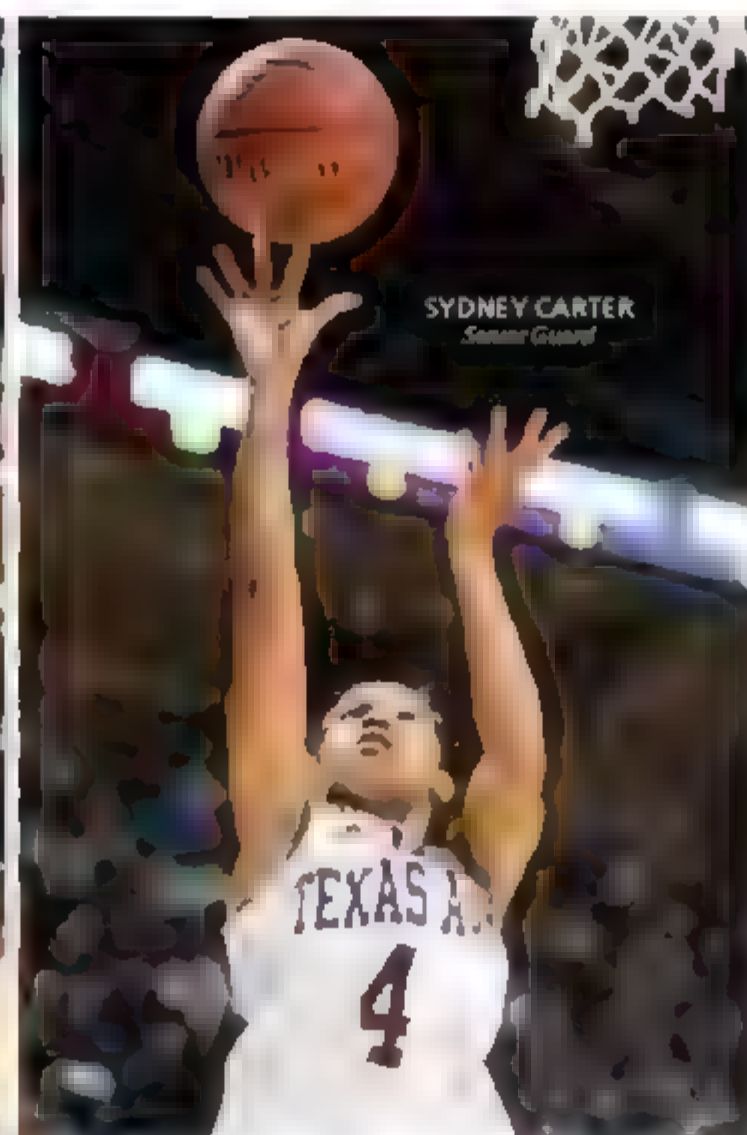
Fresh off the first national championship in school history, it's fair to say that the Aggie women's basketball team entered the 2011-12 season with the highest expectations in program history. Replacing All-Americans like Sydney Colson and Danielle Adams is always a tall order, but with Preseason Big 12 Newcomer of the Year Kelsey Bone and Preseason Big 12 Freshman of the Year Alexia Standish joining an experienced team with seniors like Sydney Carter, Tyra White and Adiora Elonu, the Aggies have the talent and depth to compete for another championship.

The Aggies faced a challenging non-conference schedule with a home matchup against 9th-ranked Louisville (76-58 W) and road contests against No. 13 Purdue (60-51 L) and 2nd-ranked Connecticut (81-51 L). UConn's victory was their 91st straight at home.

In the Ags' final year in the Big 12, there is A&M, Baylor and then everyone else. There's no question that the Aggies' road to championships will go through Waco, Texas in what promises to be some historic final battles on the Brazos. ■



TYRA WHITE
Senior Guard



SYDNEY CARTER
Senior Guard



ADIORA PRATCHER
Junior Guard



QUESTIONS FOR
TYRA WHITE AND
SYDNEY CARTER

BY KAYLE MYNAR '12
AND MACY SAVAGE '12

What was the highlight of your trip to Washington D.C. before the season?

TW: Meeting President Obama

SC: As soon as he opened the door to the oval office, everyone was freaking out. It's not every day you wake up and say I'm going to be president.

Was anyone trying to have the most time with him?

TW. Kelsey Bone and Sydney Colson

SC: Kersey wanted to spend the night [redacted] said we love you, but you didn't pick us to win

What's your most vivid memory of the national championship?

SC: Iyra's shot. When she stepped up and got

For me

TW: ... he after the ...

SC. _____

What is it like playing with a target on your back this season?

SC: Normally we see a bird hunting along the chasing...
the chasing...
is gunning...
they are...
it has...
at...
at...

Is there extra motivation and pressure with this season being A&M's last in the Big 12?

SC: I don't want to be the team they say was the last team in the Big 12 and shamed if it gives motivation the seniors and we have to make sure it's not val on for every

Can you believe it is your senior year?

SC: I can't, it's bit too sweet. Some days I'm thankful it's my senior year, but other days I think, "this is it for me."

TW: I can't believe it. I think welcome to the world with bills and other responsibilities.

Do you want to continue playing basketball after graduating?

TW: Yi want to keep playing

SC: If I have the opportunity I'll take it. If not, I bid a bid that can make it in the real world. I would be behind a desk or be someone's boss.

What is your dream job?

SC: I would love to be an OB GYN - watch the shows and I love it. I would go to school that long but should have started four years ago - that's why it's still a dream.

TW You'd be in fashion. I like shoes and

SC. ☐ has style. She has the clothes and shoes.

How would you describe each of your coaches in one word?

TW: Gary Blair – Knowledge

SC /ic Schaefer - Passi

TW *John E. Harris*

SC: Bond: Head: Saw a very smart lady
get anything past her

Are we going to see any new dance moves from you guys or Coach Blair?

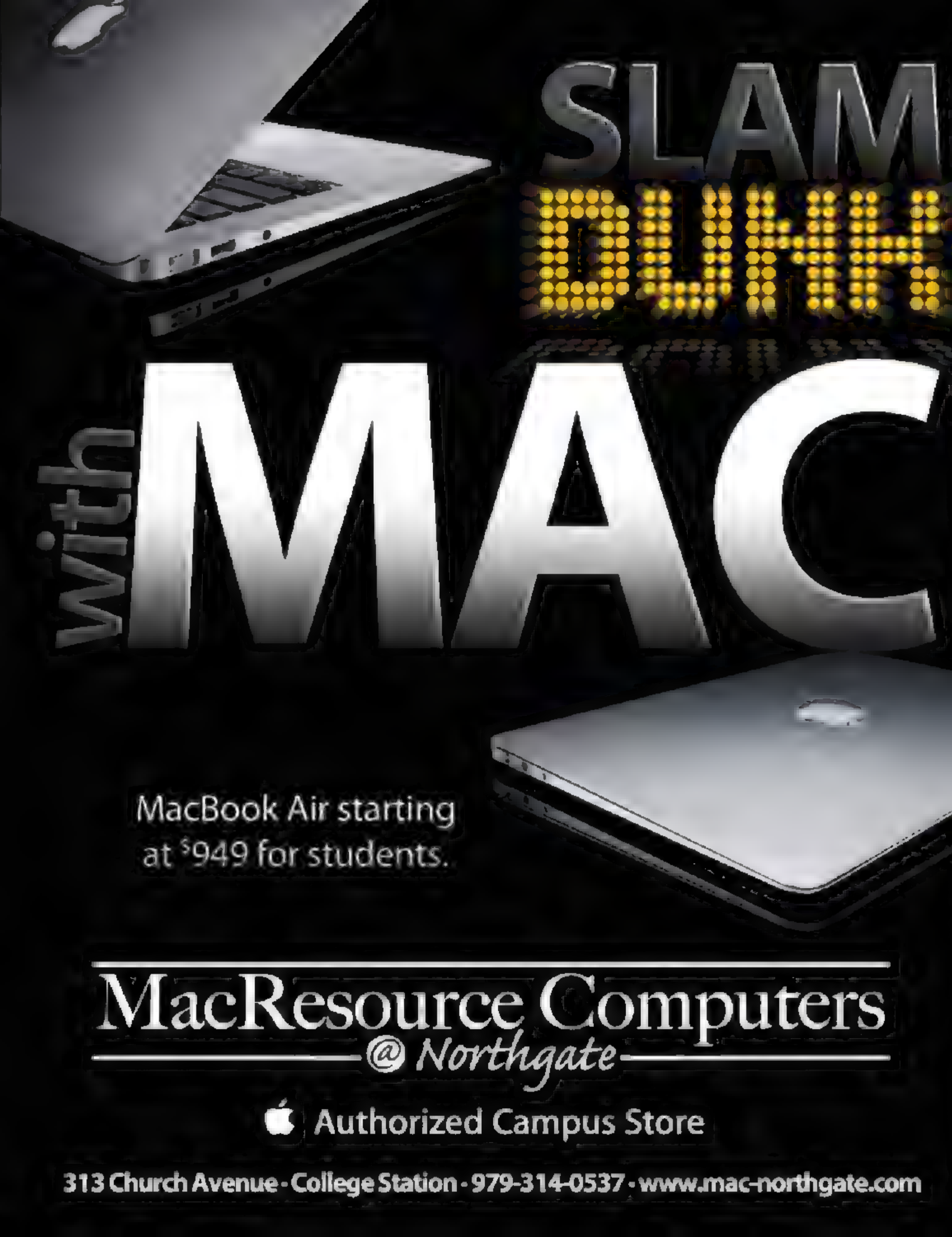
TW: It may just pop up. Coach Bar may be on

SC: ... never know ... Blair wanted me to ...
... ch him the South ... Swag. He asked if ...
... he the big ... it's from the 60s

TW the interlocking though

SC: I think he will try the South Da as Swag this year. I think he thinks he knows how to Wot.

...he may just stick with the Dougie **EW**



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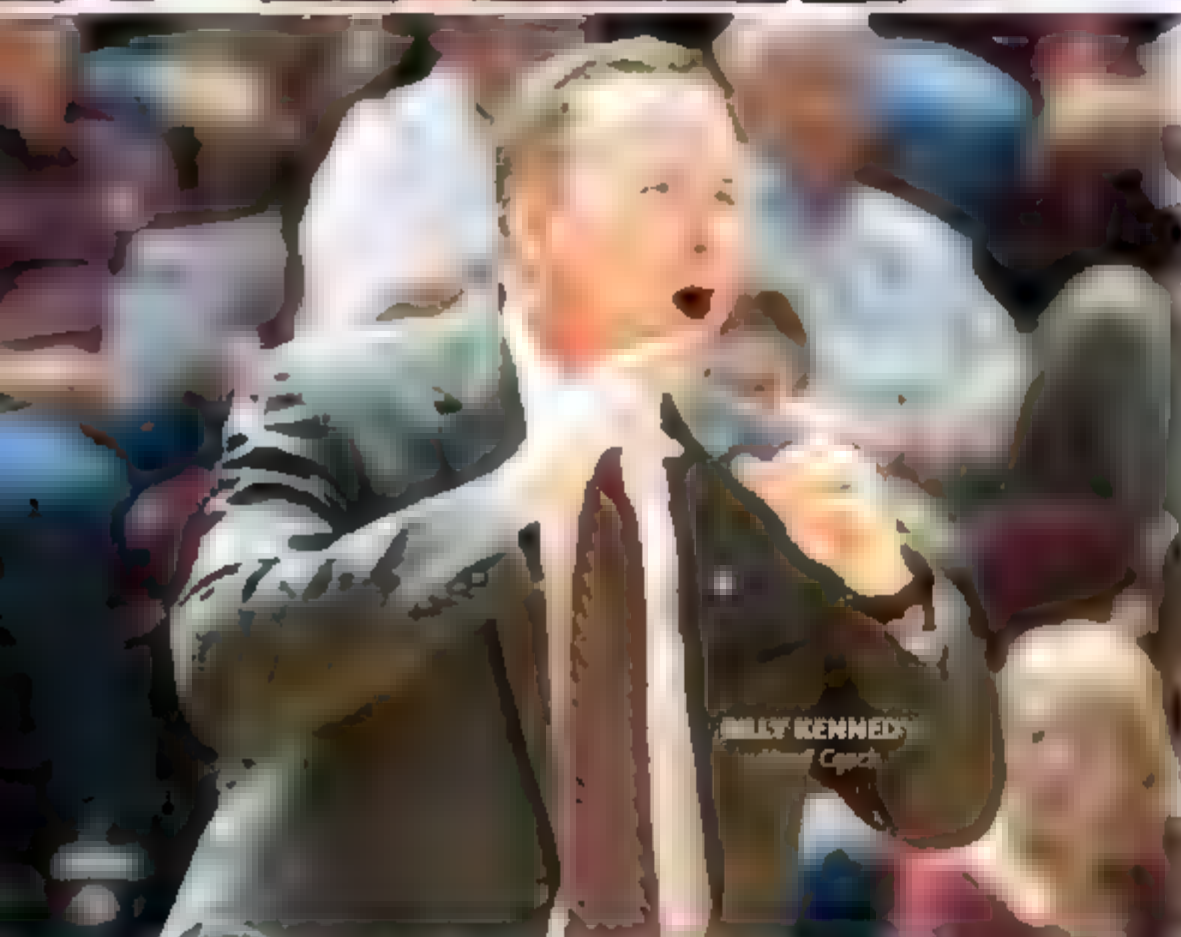
KHRIS MIDDLETON
Junior Forward



KORTNEY HODGSON
Senior Forward



JORDAN GREEN
Freshman Guard



BILLY KENNEDY
Head Coach

The season got off to a rocky start for first-year head coach Billy Kennedy's program. Just weeks before the first game, Kennedy took a leave of absence for health reasons and was ultimately diagnosed with early stages of Parkinson's disease. Then, in the first half of the season opener against Liberty, Khris Middleton suffered a partially torn meniscus – an injury that kept him off the court for the next seven games.

On the court, the Aggies faced very few challenges during non-conference play. They did not play a true road game and in three neutral site contests, A&M defeated St. John's by one and lost to future SEC foes Mississippi State and Florida.

In league action, the Aggies will be tested right from the first tip with their final road trips to Waco and Austin sandwiched around a home game against Iowa State. The next game marks Billy Gillispie's much anticipated return to Reed Arena. The schedule doesn't get any easier from there, so if the Ags find a way to live up to preseason expectations, it will be a memorable last ride through the Big 12 Conference. ■

LASON MCCONNELL '01 AND BRIAN DAVIS '01



KEITH DAVIS
Sophomore Center



JAMAL BRANCH
Freshman Guard



ELSTON TURNER
Senior Guard

01.02.12 WACO
02.01.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Bears 58 - Aggies 51 (Waco)

HEAD COACH:

Scott Drew (9th year) 44-84 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Bayor has made at least one 3-point field goal in 629 consecutive games - the second-longest active streak in the Big 12. More than 51 percent of Quincy Acy's career FGs have been dunks. The Bears started the season 10-0 for only the second time in program history.

01.07.12 COLLEGE STATION
02.11.12 AMES



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 71 - Cyclones 66 (College Station)

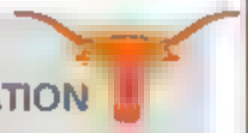
HEAD COACH:

Fred Holberg (2nd year) 3-13 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Sophomore forward Royce White was named Big 12's Preseason Newcomer of the Year by the league's coaches. Iowa State has eight newcomers this year competing in a Cyclone uniform for the first time. Iowa State ranks first in the Big 12 and 22nd nationally in 3 pointers per game (8.8).

01.11.12 AUSTIN
02.06.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Longhorns 70 - Aggies 58 (Kansas City)

HEAD COACH:

Rick Barnes (14th year) 151-57 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

J'Covan Brown leads the team in scoring (19.3 ppg). Texas is one of just six schools to have advanced to each of the last 13 NCAA Tournaments. Texas is the only school in the country that can claim two different National Player of the Year winners in the last nine years (T.J. Ford, 2003; Kevin Durant, 2007).

01.14.12 COLLEGE STATION
02.14.12 LUBBOCK



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 66 - Red Raiders 54 (College Station)

HEAD COACH:

Billy Gillispie (1st year) 31-17 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

Freshman Jordan Forbert leads the team in points (14.0), rebounds (6.2) and FG percentage (.613). For 12 straight days, the Red Raiders visited area hospitals, worked with local charities and provided a helping hand during the holiday season as a part of Billy Gillispie's Red Raider 12 Days of Christmas.

02.18.12 COLLEGE STATION



Aggies 86 - Tigers 71 (Kansas City)

Frank Harsh (1st year)

Mizzou is currently the highest ranked team that is under the direction of a first year head coach this season. The Tigers are one of the nation's and Big 12's best shooting teams as the squad ranks third nationally and first in the Big 12 in FG percentage (.526).

01.21.12 COLLEGE STATION
03.03.12 NORMAN



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 61 - Sooners 47 (College Station)

HEAD COACH:

Lon Kruger (1st year)

NEWS AND NOTES:

Junior Steven Pledger leads NCAA D-1 guards with .604 FG percentage and ranks No. 4 nationally in 3-point FG percentage (.512). Junior forward Romero Osby leads the Big 12 with his 3.6 offensive rebounds per game and ranks third in the league with his 7.8 overall boards per outing.

01.23.12 LAWRENCE
02.22.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Jayhawks 64 - Aggies 51 (Lawrence)

HEAD COACH:

Bill Self (9th year) 107-21 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

An American candidate Thomas Robinson is the only player in the Big 12 to average a double-double with 18.1 points and 12.1 rebounds per game. In the last five years, from 2007-11, Kansas is the winningest team in NCAA D-1 with a 165-22 (.882 percent) record.

01.28.12 COLLEGE STATION



Aggies 67 - Cowboys 66 (Stillwater)

Travis Ford (4th year) 24-24 in Big 12

In four of OSU's six wins this season, the Cowboys trailed by at least seven points at some point during the game. Senior Kerton Page and freshman Le'Bryan Nash are tied for the team lead in scoring, both averaging 12.7 points per contest. Oklahoma State has 55 blocked shots through 10 games.

02.04.12 MANHATTAN
02.28.12 COLLEGE STATION



LAST MEETING:

Aggies 64 - Wildcats 56 (College Station)

HEAD COACH:

Frank Martin (5th year) 40-24 in Big 12

NEWS AND NOTES:

The Wildcats are averaging a Big 12 best 42.0 rebounds per game, including 15.5 on the offensive end. Seven players average six or more points, including four in double figures. Junior seven-footer Jordan Henriquez ranks 10th nationally with 3.1 blocks per



2011-12 PRESEASON POLL POINTS

1	Kansas (1)	10
2	Texas A&M (2)	8
3	Baylor (2)	7
4	Nebraska	6
5	Kansas State	5
6	Missouri	4
7	Oklahoma State	3
8	Iowa State	2
9	West Virginia	1
10	TCU	0

PRESEASON PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Thomas Robinson, Kansas, F, 6-11, 235

PRESEASON NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Royce White, Iowa State, F, 6-8, 270, So.

PRESEASON FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Le'Bryan Nash, Oklahoma State, F, 6-7, 205, Jr.

2011-12 PRESEASON ALL-BIG 12 TEAM

Guard: Thomas Robinson, Kansas, F, 6-11, 235, Sr.

Forward: Royce White, Iowa State, F, 6-8, 270, So.

Guard: Marcus Denmon, Missouri, G, 6-3, 185, Sr.

Forward: J'Covan Brown, Texas, G, 6-1, 197, J.

Forward: Khris Middleton, Texas A&M, F, 6-7, 210, Jr.



Glynn Cyprien's arrival in Aggieland marked the first recruiting coup of the Billy Kennedy era BY KAYLE NIXON 12

When Billy Kennedy sat down with his associate head coach Glynn Cyprien one day in late October, it wasn't to talk about basketball. Kennedy was there to tell his longtime friend that he had been diagnosed with early stages of Parkinson's disease.

"I tried to be a man's man and be tough for him," Cyprien said. "Our relationship isn't just coaching, we are very good friends in every aspect of life."

Having known Kennedy since they were teenagers, Cyprien considers his new boss a part of his family. At Jesuit High School in New Orleans, Cyprien played football with Kennedy's brother and had Kennedy's stepfather as an English teacher. While in college, the two coached AAU basketball together.

Cyprien lettered two seasons as a basketball player at Southern University-New Orleans, but a career in coaching was not on his radar. In fact, he was considering going to law school, but life had a different plan for him.

During the summer prior to his junior year, Cyprien was coaching AAU basketball in New Orleans when Ken Burneister – the head coach of the University of

Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) – came to one of his games on a recruiting trip.

"After watching my team play, he offered me a job on the spot," Cyprien recalled. "I thought he was crazy."

After visiting the UTSA campus later that week, Cyprien decided he couldn't pass up the opportunity and had to call his basketball coach to let him know that he was giving up playing to go into coaching.

"The next day I was on a plane to San Antonio," Cyprien said. "It doesn't happen like that anymore, but I've been very fortunate."

In his first year at UTSA in 1988, Cyprien helped the Roadrunners earn the school's first NCAA Tournament berth. In addition to his natural coaching ability, Cyprien quickly earned a reputation as an excellent recruiter.

In 1990, Cyprien was hired away by Lamar University. He spent one season with the Cardinals before moving on to coaching stops at Jacksonville (1991-94), Western Kentucky (1994-95), UNLV (1995-2000), Oklahoma State (2000-04), Louisiana-Lafayette (2004), New Mexico State (2005-06), Arkansas (2006-07),

Kentucky (2007-09) and Memphis (2009-10). Meanwhile, Kennedy was working his way up the coaching ladder as well including a stop as an assistant at Texas A&M in 1990-91.

As each of their careers advanced, Kennedy and Cyprien kept in touch no matter how many miles separated them. They talked about life, basketball and even the possibility of coaching together one day if the right opportunity came along. When Kennedy got the job at Texas A&M, it's no surprise that Cyprien was one of the first to receive a phone call.

"He was very excited and told me that he wanted to talk again when he was finished with his introductory press conference," Cyprien said. "I flew down a few days later and we had an opportunity to sit down and talk. The ball started rolling from there."

Hiring his longtime friend as his right hand man was truly a no-brainer for Kennedy. Not only did he bring invaluable experience at premier programs in the Big 12 and SEC, Cyprien is widely regarded as one of the nation's best recruiters.

"For me, in recruiting, everyone is involved," Cyprien said. "When you bring a kid to camp, everyone has to know he's there. It's a joint effort. Make him feel welcomed. We want to go out and get the best kids and compete against the top schools in the country."

Even though people stereotype Texas A&M as a football school, especially when recruiting, Cyprien tells them to look at all the other sports that have had success – specifically the defending national champion women's basketball team.

"The women's basketball team makes people see that it can happen here," Cyprien said, "and that's what I've been preaching to every recruit I've talked to."

Having just gone through the process himself, Cyprien has no problem selling recruits on coming to Aggieland and joining the A&M program.

"The people here are unbelievably friendly," he said. "They bleed Aggie blood. I'm learning yells at the games, going from side to side. I moved my mom here. I've embraced the whole Aggie experience."

While Cyprien will undoubtedly help fill future rosters with talented basketball players, it's clear that Kennedy made the biggest recruiting splash for his program in his first week on the job. ■



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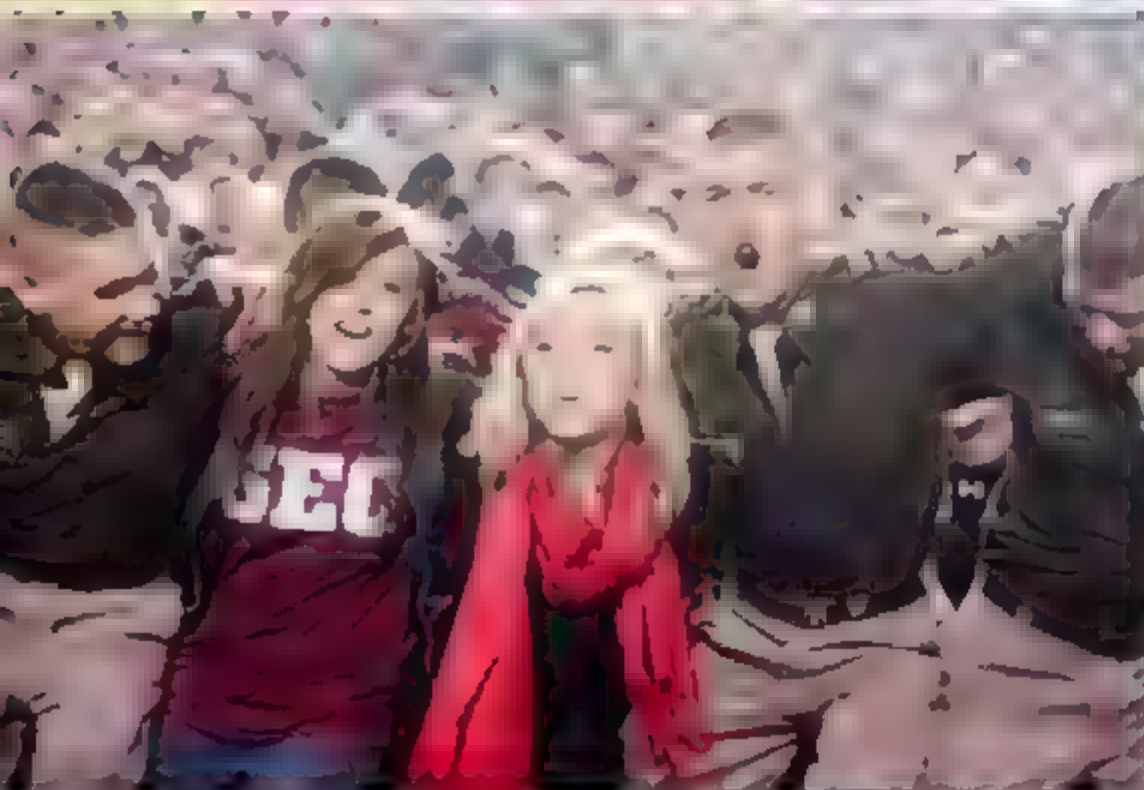
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A&M WATER SKI & POWERLIFTING

By BRIAN JAVES '11

WATER SKI

The Texas A&M Water Ski club leases a private lake about 25 miles from campus for practice. However, it has been over a year since any of the club members have skied there. Like many bodies of water across Texas, the driest year in the state's history has turned Lord's Lake into a desert wasteland.

As the club's president, Will Stevenson '13 volunteered to move the club's practices to his family's home on Lake Conroe.

"It takes an all day commitment to practice now," he said. "We spend three hours just on the road. It's a challenge with school and everything else going on, but we have managed to make it work."

Stevenson has always known he wanted to be an Aggie and be involved in water ski. He has been skiing his entire life and his uncle was captain of the team when he was at A&M.

Established in 1975, the club typically has around 30 to 40 members. Most, however, are not like Stevenson.

"They have never heard of competitive water ski and don't know that tournaments exist," he said. "Their family has a boat or they went to the lake with their friends one time and had a lot of fun. Once they join, they are amazed at what all you can do. It's neat because they join not realizing how big of a sport it is and then they get into it and really progress."

The Aggies compete in four tournaments in the fall and three in the spring. Men and women skiers compete in three events – slalom, trick and jump.

"It's unique because the men's and women's combined score makes up the team score," Stevenson said. "So while the men are our better skiers, the women have the potential to score more points for the team because of the level of competition."

Last year, the Aggies qualified for division one nationals for the first time in over a decade. To qualify, a team must finish in the top three of their region and the two best schools in the nation – Louisiana-Lafayette and Louisiana-Monroe – dominate A&M's region. In fact, one of those two schools is guaranteed to win nationals every year. The Aggies compete with Texas State,



Texas, Baylor, LSU and Arkansas for the third spot.

"I'm pretty proud of beating out those other teams for the third spot without any water to ski in," Stevenson said.

If you want to become a great water skier, Stevenson will tell you that it requires commitment, training and most importantly, time on the water. However, you don't have to be a great water skier to be in the club.

"We have a lot of fun," Stevenson said. "I run the club, but the other members aren't just my club members – they are my best friends. We travel all over the country together and you really get to know people on road trips. There's something about the water that brings together people who love to have fun. I feel like that's what our club is made of."

POWERLIFTING

On any given day, hundreds of Aggies can be found working out at the Texas A&M Student Recreation Center. A closer look at the 14,000-square-foot Weight & Fitness Room, and you will likely find Kayla James '12 lifting weights with some of her best friends.

James is the current president of the Texas A&M Powerlifting club. Formed in the early '80s as the Weight Lifting Club, it evolved into powerlifting – a form of weightlifting consisting of three events: the squat, bench press and dead lift.

The Aggies train four days a week throughout the year for two meets in the Fall and one more in the spring before their main event in April – the USA Powerlifting Collegiate Nationals.

About 60 percent of the club's members have experience in powerlifting from high school, while the rest are new to a sport that requires a great deal of dedication and discipline.

"You have to be dedicated to not let the little things bother you," James said. "You also have to be disciplined to show up to practice four days a week and work hard every day. You can't slack off one day, because if you do, that's one day your competition just put five more pounds on the bar before you."

After a second place finish in 2009, the women's team won the national title in 2010. The team finished second again in 2011 with every girl placing in the top five. One senior – Tiffany McKinney – will be graduating as a four-time national champion in her weight class. On the men's side, there is a little more competition. The Aggies placed fifth in 2010 and seventh in 2011.

In addition to their success on the national stage, everyone on the team is very close.

"Many of the lifters have become my best friends," James said. "We rely on each other for everything, in and out of the gym."

Visit recsports.tamu.edu for more information about Texas A&M powerlifting or water ski. 



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Howdy!

It has been a dramatic few weeks in Aggieland.

A stomach twisting loss to the longhorns simply nailed the coffin closed on the ultimate football season letdown.

Then the firing of Mike Sherman angered even those protesting him all season. Whether you agreed with his play calling or not, it just seemed awfully unjust that the news was leaked to the media before Sherman himself knew. After all he has done for the program and the university, Sherman deserved to hear it first and have the opportunity to tell his family and his team.

Finally, the roller coaster ride of hiring a new head coach was the bitter icing on top of a fat-free cake. As the process wore on, it seemed Aggie fans couldn't help but feel overwhelmed by all of the bold moves that have been made in the past several months.

Whether you are on or off the Kevin Sumlin bandwagon, the bottom line is that we are diving head first into the toughest division in the country with a new football coach after a 6-6 season in the Big 12-2, and the forecast is looking cloudy with a chance of rain.

However, all of that hasn't stopped us from having a little twitter fun! Here are some questions that were suggested for administrators to ask candidates during the #AggieHCTInterview:



@Daryl_Free

#AggieHCTInterview How many quarters are there in football?

@CrocodileJohnD

#AggieHCTInterview Do you care about defense? No. Good, neither do we.

@CrocodileJohnD

#AggieHCTInterview Will you call Loftin a putz on message boards?

@rcflores84

#AggieHCTInterview have you coached here before? Yes? You're hired

@97AggieGal

Show us your best "hump it"
#AggieHCTInterview



Fan on us Facebook to see photo galleries from many Aggie sporting events

Aggie tweeters also imagined what might have happened at Texas A&M's final #Big12ChristmasParty:



@robassidy22

The song is still called the "The 12 days of Christmas" even though the version being played only recounts 10 days.

#Big12ChristmasParty

@_BEAST_MODE

Tech offers to host the Christmas play but couldn't find 3 wise men and a virgin in Lubbock

#Big12ChristmasParty

@jaydoug96

Cops just showed up next door at the #SECChristmasParty. Seems Bama and LSU are at it again. I think OSU called 'em.

#Big12ChristmasParty

@Ransomer

During the Secret Santa exchange, Dan Beebe blows open the \$15 limit when he gets DeLoss Dodds an iPad.

#Big12ChristmasParty

@maroonjunky

No one wanted Garret Gilbert on their team for the snow ball fight

#Big12ChristmasParty

@RandyAg_98

Sherman gave RG3 a gift. Art Briles stormed in. "Is that an A&M gift? You don't have to open that!"

#Big12ChristmasParty

@FredGherkin

15 years after being invited to the #Big12ChristmasParty for the first time, Baylor finally brings something to the table.

@cuppycup

Mack Brown explains to the kids that Santa Claus and the Longhorn Network are both real. You just can't see them.

#Big12ChristmasParty

Be sure to follow us on twitter @aggiemag. We have some great giveaways coming up soon. Also, fan on facebook to see some of our photos from nearly all A&M sporting events.

In the next #interncorner, be looking for coverage of the Tannehill wedding and whatever else may pop up between

now and then! Until then, I leave you with this good bull story on Von Miller that has been spreading through social media and email:

I am a breast cancer survivor. Each summer A&M sponsors a breast cancer fundraiser called Chalk Talk. It is basically Football 101 for women. All of the coaches and most of the players are there. The evening includes a meal with coaches and players, a panel of players answering questions from the audience, football drills led by the position coaches and players, a meeting with the OC, meeting with the DC, a visit to the dressing room, and walking onto Kyle Field under the lights to the same drum entrance the team uses. It is an amazing experience and I highly recommend to every Aggie lady!

The first year, I had just completed my chemo and had about a half inch of hair. A young soft-spoken player came up to me, stuck out his hand and said, "Hi, I'm Von Miller." We visited about 45 minutes and parted best buddies. The next year, Von came across the room to me, wanting to know how I was doing. Even called me by name!

Last spring, after the NFL draft, I wrote Von a letter congratulating him and thanking him for being such a great Fightin Texas Aggie. Until recently, I did not know if he had received the letter.

About a month ago, I received a package. I opened it and could see the front of a football jersey that said Broncos. However, the light bulb did not come on! Called the number on the return address to tell them I had received the package by mistake and would be returning it. The lady on the phone said, "I need you to take the jersey out the package and look at the back." On the back is "Miller" "58" and a personalized autograph to me. Lady said, "Von just wanted you to know how much he appreciated your letter." I even got a phone call later from his mother checking if I had gotten the jersey!

That, ladies and gentlemen, is the Aggie Spirit and something many of you need to be reminded of! Gig'em

Gig'em, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

— Macy



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